



Beaver County Emergency Services

Quarterly Newsletter - Volume 3, Issue 1

OPERATION STEEL HAMMER

By Schuyler Mu

Beaver County, in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Region 13 Task Force, comprised of the 13 counties surrounding and including the City of Pittsburgh, hosted the Operation Steel Hammer full scale counterterrorism exercise the weekend of September 14 – 16, 2007.

This exercise was one of the largest of its kind, involving multiple agencies from municipal, county, state, and federal levels of government and emergency response. Steel Hammer included approximately 20 different scenarios held in venues across the Pittsburgh metro region, with events concentrated in Beaver County. Exercise events took place around the clock, with no scheduled breaks in the action.

The following is an approximate timeline of the exercise events that took place in Beaver County alone:

Friday, September 14, 2007

8:00 am to 4:00 pm:	Beaver County Airport, CST
8:00 am to 1:00 pm:	Brady's Run Park, medical surge
9:00 am to 12 noon:	Beaver County Courthouse evacuation
9:00 am to 12 noon:	The Medical Center, medical surge
9:00 am to 1:00 pm:	Beaver Valley Power Station
6:00 pm to 10:00 pm:	Industry tank farm
8:00 pm to midnight:	Northern Lights Shopping Center, CST

Saturday, September 15, 2007

3:00 am to 5:00 pm:	Beaver County parking garage
5:00 am to 2:00 pm:	Ohio River, CST
6:00 am to 3:00 pm:	South Beaver search and rescue
9:00 am to 2:00 pm:	CCBC medical surge
9:00 am to 2:00 pm:	Norfolk Southern, Conway Yards
11:00 pm to 1:00 am:	Beaver Valley Mall, CST

Sunday, September 16, 2007

3:00 am to 10:00 am:	South Side High School, CST
6:00 am to 1:00 pm:	Freedom High School, medical surge
9:00 am to 12 noon:	Beaver High School, hostage situation
9:00 am to 12 noon:	Rochester Township, power disruption

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WINTER, 2008

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SPECIAL STEEL HAMMER ISSUE

OPERATION STEEL HAMMER, CONT.

The overarching scenario for Steel Hammer concerned a series of terrorist events involving weapons of mass destruction, chemical and biological in nature.

medical services were able to practice medical surge response, field hospital

Exercise goals included demonstrating interoperability of communications between local and regional responders as well as demonstration of effective incident command and control.

Beaver County was supported by her regional partners as the county's Emergency Operations Center and 911 Center were "knocked out" at the start of the exercise. While real world operations continued as normal at the Beaver County 911 center, support counties within the region took turns running the county's EOC for exercise purposes. Beaver County 911 for the exercise was established in the county's mobile command unit, and the county's EOC was eventually reestablished in an alternate location on the last day of the exercise.



CIVIL SUPPORT TEAMS PARTNERED WITH LOCAL RESPONSE AGENCIES FOR SEVERAL EVENTS INVOLVING WMD RESPONSE INCLUDING A SEARCH & RESCUE OPERATION IN THE WOODS OF SOUTH BEAVER TOWNSHIP AND A CHEM/BIO LAB INVESTIGATION AT THE BEAVER COUNTY AIRPORT.

PHOTOS COURTESY CST



set up, and regional ambulance staging and response in conjunction with the mass care needs simulated within scenarios

Venues directly involved in terrorism scenarios

included all military sites (where WMD Civil Support Teams from the Carolinas, Ohio, and Pennsylvania worked with local responders), as well as the Beaver County Courthouse and parking garage events, the South Beaver search and rescue operation, and the Conway Yards exercise.

Other types of scenarios which indirectly tied into the overarching WMD events included fixed facility security and chemical release operations at Beaver Valley Power Station and DCP Midstream as well as an active shooter scenario at Beaver High School and a power outage in Rochester Township. Additionally, hospitals and emergency



While Operation Steel Hammer was a federally funded exercise, venues were not individually evaluated by federal officials. Each site was given the opportunity to select their own controllers and evaluators, offering responders a valuable no fault learning experience. Evaluators utilized federal guidelines and checklists which helped to identify shortcomings and will contribute to the creation of the final After Action Report with recommendations for improvement.



BEAVER COUNTY COURTHOUSE EMPLOYEES LEARNED A VALUABLE LESSON IN EVACUATION PLANNING DURING THEIR STEEL HAMMER EXERCISE.

PHOTOS BY STEVEN JOY



EMS NEWS

By Eric Brewer,
Beaver County EMS Coordinator



EMS PARTICIPATION IN STEEL HAMMER

EMS agencies comprised a significant portion of the agencies participating in Steel Hammer and were involved throughout the exercise weekend at venues as both participants and as stand by services for real world events. Ambulance services from 5 different EMS regions across the Commonwealth participated in this drill. Some of these services were from Department of Health (DOH) Strike teams from across the state as well as the PA DOH Region 4 Strike Team, which is from our local EMSI (Emergency Medical Services Institute) region.

The objectives that the county wanted to test during this exercise were:

- Notification of EMS agencies in multiple counties.
- Coordinated response of EMS agencies from multiple counties to a pre-designated staging area from which point services would be moved around the county.
- Use of the state 800 radio and other radio systems.

One area that local and regional EMS felt they did not need to exercise was the immobilization and loading of patients into units, since services do this on a daily basis. Anticipating that some issues would be identified in the process, we did not expect to pass all of the tests that were built into the exercise. We discovered areas in Beaver County where the state 800 radio has poor coverage and also found other communication problems. For instance, when mutual aid units come into our county, they may not have radios to communicate with us and vice versa.

During the exercise weekend, Dr. Tom Stein, Director of the Division of Prehospital Medicine at Allegheny General Hospital, along with the DOH Strike Teams, set up CCP (Casualty Collection Points) throughout Beaver County. The concept of the CCP is to take the surge off of the hospitals during a multiple patient or prolonged event. CCP consists of 4 large tents with heating and air conditioning units, lights, cots, and other equipment needed to create a self-sustaining environment during a patient surge incident. Dr Stein also brought along medical staff from Allegheny General Hospital who hosted con-ed each day of the Steel Hammer exercise.



CASUALTY COLLECTION POINT AT BRADY'S RUN PARK



EMS NEWS

By Eric Brewer,
Beaver County EMS Coordinator



NEWS FROM THE EMS DESK

- The **EMSOF (Emergency Medical Service Operating Fund) funding** for the 2007-2008 year has been distributed. Beaver County was given \$31,749.00 to disburse to the ambulance services. We have 5 licensed ambulance services and 3 state certified QRS services that may apply for the funding on a 60/40 match. The ambulance services get the first chance at the funding, with the rest going to the QRS services, should there be funds remaining.

The following priorities were designated for the use of the EMSOF money:

- ◊ Recruitment and retention programs
- ◊ Organizational risk management programs
- ◊ Capnography capability
- ◊ 12-Lead capability
- ◊ CPAP capability
- ◊ Requests by licensed BLS and ALS services with primary response areas

The licensed services in Beaver County that may apply for the funding are:

- ◊ Economy Ambulance
- ◊ Hanover Ambulance
- ◊ Independence Fire/EMS
- ◊ Medic Rescue

Beaver County's licensed QRS services include:

- ◊ Big Knob Fire
- ◊ Brighton Township Fire
- ◊ Chippewa Township Fire

- **In 2008, EMS Providers meetings will be held at 10 AM at the BCESC on:**
 - ◊ February 5
 - ◊ May 6
 - ◊ August 5
 - ◊ November 18

Eric Brewer can be reached at: ebrewer@beavercountypa.gov

NEWS & NOTES

MUNICIPAL NEWS

- **Quarterly training for Beaver County Municipal Emergency Management Coordinators** was held in two sessions on July 31st. Many municipalities were represented at the training, which covered topics including the Small Business Administration, volunteers during disaster, and municipal emergency preparedness plans. Dates and times of future trainings will be made available to coordinators soon.
- Municipalities have been invited to participate in **NIMSCAST**, an online NIMS compliance tracking tool implemented by FEMA and already in use at state and county levels. Offices have been asked to select a NIMSCAST point of contact who may then complete a survey either online or in hardcopy form regarding their municipality's level of NIMS compliance. For more information on NIMSCAST, please contact Schuyler at 724-775-1700.
- The Emergency Services center is currently working with non-risk municipalities to update their **Municipal Emergency Operations Plans**. The Notification and Resource section from the state's new planning template was forwarded to municipalities at the beginning of November. Once complete, offices have been asked to return this information to the county to be incorporated into a new EOP. Debbie Miketa, a planning consultant for Emergency Services, is helping to coordinate these updates.

PERSONNEL NEWS

- Congratulations are in order for Lynn Ostrowski, Chris Stone, and Eric Swartz who have all been promoted to **full time telecommunicator** status since our last publication.
- A pre-employment **telecommunicator testing session** was held on Saturday, September 29 for applicants for county dispatch positions. Dispatch Crew Chief Greg Sherman helped to update and administer the multi-skill tests which included written, verbal, and typing modules. Applicants who passed the test were eligible to participate in the latest telecommunicator training class, which began on November 12.
- In September, Skip Mattern took over the position of part time **Beaver County Hazmat Equipment Technician**. His duties include repairing and maintaining the county's hazmat response equipment and vehicles as well as overseeing the garage storage facility. He works at the county's hazmat garage along with Gene Miketa, **Beaver County's Region 13 Equipment Coordinator** and Victor Spinelli, **Beaver County's Region 13 Training Coordinator**.

OTHER NEWS & NOTES

- The **16th annual Beaver County Emergency Services Golf Outing** was held on Monday, August 20th at Hawthorne Valley Golf Club in Ohioville Borough. As always, the event was well attended and provided an enjoyable day for all involved. Next year's outing has been scheduled for Monday, September 15, 2008.
- Mary Rosenberg from **American Messaging Paging** continues to be Beaver County's contact for alphanumeric paging. Her visits to the Emergency Services Center are announced by email to municipal agencies monthly. Between visits, please contact American Messaging Customer Service at 888-223-4123 for pager service issues. For account and sales issues, Mary Rosenberg can be reached at 330-215-2294.
- If you or your department are not receiving **email notices** regarding Mary's visits or other pertinent police, fire, hazmat, or EMA issues, please email Schuyler at smu@beavercountypa.gov with your information, and she will add you to the appropriate email distribution list.

UPDATES

REGION 13 TASK FORCE

BY GENE MIKETA & VIC SPINELLI

- **Photo Identification Badges** were issued to many municipal employees in 2007. IDs are being offered to fire, police, EMA, EOC, and municipal office and public works personnel. Additional dates will be scheduled in 2008 for those who have not yet received identification, and notification of photo sessions will be made by email to municipal agencies.
- **Mask Fit Testing** will continue in 2008. Local law enforcement officers who have not yet been fit tested are encouraged to contact Vic Spinelli or Gene Miketa at 724-891-3828 or 724-775-1700. Testing will be scheduled by appointment only for the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of most months at the Beaver County Hazmat Garage.
- Beaver County continues to receive **new equipment** through the Region 13 Task force. Most recently, we obtained three **Luminites**, compact, portable, inflatable lights which provide 875 Watts of illumination, draw on 8.5 amps, and inflate from a fan at their base. The county will be carrying a Luminites on its Traffic Control Trailer as well as on its new Kodiak 4500 Prime Mover Truck. The third light has been proposed to be placed on the county's mobile communications unit. The lights provide a soft, indirect light and were most recently used during the Steel Hammer exercise at the CCP set up (see picture of lights in use in the field on page 3). Equipment provided by the task force has been made available by federal funding through the Department of Homeland Security. Purchases must meet DHS standards for equipping local and regional responders in preparation for a WMD event, and purchasing requests are channeled from the county level through the region's Equipment Committee, comprised of representatives from the 13 counties of the task force.



RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

BY KEVIN JOY

- On July 24, local law enforcement services were given the opportunity to have their **radio equipment re-programmed** in accordance with the county's new guidelines. A total of 166 mobile and portable radios were reprogrammed by representatives from Staley Communications, Interstate Radio, and the Emergency Services Center.
- In August of this year, Beaver County 9-1-1 made the decision to **consolidate police zones** from four to three. Initially this was done only on a trial basis. However, after two months of the trial with no major obstacles, it was decided that three zones would remain.
 - ◊ There are several advantages of only going with three zones. The most noticeable is the improved radio coverage. With three zones, we are better able to utilize the county's existing tower sites. For example, we now have four different tower sites for the 155.010 frequency, those are the sites in South Beaver, Beaver Falls, North Sewickley and Brighton Township. On frequency 154.740, we have towers in Beaver, Brighton Township, Harmony, Hopewell and North Sewickley. And on 155.565, we have towers in Freedom, Hopewell and Midland.
 - ◊ Some of the other improvements are: at least one call taker is available 22 hours a day, a separate channel and dispatcher can take traffic during an emergency, a more balanced work load for our dispatchers, and reduced ring times for people calling 9-1-1.
- **Beginning January 1, 2008, Beaver County 9-1-1 will no longer fax information from J-Net.** However, the Center will continue to fax information that is obtained from the CLEAN system. Now that J-Net is available to every department, it no longer makes sense for the 9-1-1 Center to duplicate the information that is available in each station. Another enhancement made available by the 9-1-1 Center is the availability for every police department to have access to the 9-1-1 Computer System. With this access, officers can now check on all of their calls from the last shift and add any pertinent information to their reports. Additionally, chiefs will be able to audit their department's calls.

DECEMBER 2007

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

- **2nd - 5th:** EPA Conference, Pittsburgh Hilton
- **4th:** Hanukkah begins at sundown
- **5th:** Hazmat Team training, 6:30 PM, Hazmat Garage
- **12th:** Firefighter's Association Meeting, 7:30 PM, Hazmat Garage
- **13th:** Hazmat Refresher Training for LE, 1 PM, Hazmat Garage
- **16th:** United Valley REACT, 6 PM
- **21st:** Emergency Services Christmas Party, Noon - 4 PM
- **22nd:** Winter begins
- **25th - 26th:** Christmas, County offices closed
- **26th:** Kwanzaa begins

JANUARY 2008

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

- **1st:** New Year's Day, County offices closed
- **2nd:** Hazmat Team training, 6:30 PM, Hazmat Garage
- **8th:** LEPC meeting, 2:30 PM
- **9th:** Firefighter's Association Meeting, 7:30 PM, Hazmat Garage
- **10th:** American Messaging Paging Representative, 10:30 AM
- **16th:** Hazmat Team training, 6:30 PM, Hazmat Garage
- **21st:** Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, County offices closed

FEBRUARY 2008

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	

- **2nd:** Groundhog Day
- **5th:** EMS Providers Meeting 10 AM
- **6th:** Hazmat Team training, 6:30 PM, Hazmat Garage
- **13th:** Firefighter's Association Meeting, 7:30 PM, Hazmat Garage
- **14th:** Valentine's Day
- **14th:** American Messaging Paging Representative, 10:30 AM
- **18th:** President's Day, County offices closed
- **20th:** Hazmat Team training, 6:30 PM, Hazmat Garage
- **29th:** Leap Day

ALL EVENTS LOCATED AT THE BEAVER COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES CENTER, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2007 NOON - 4

**BEAVER COUNTY
EMERGENCY SERVICES'
CHRISTMAS
PARTY**

**Bring the family for Santa's
annual visit!**

**Emergency Services Center
250 East End Avenue
Beaver, PA 15009**

724-775-1700



BEAVER COUNTY
EMERGENCY SERVICES

250 East End Avenue
Beaver, PA 15009
Phone: 724-775-1700

BEAVER COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
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The Beaver County EMA Newsletter is created and published by the Beaver County Emergency Services Center (BCESC).

The BCESC is a division of Beaver County government, under the authority of the Beaver County Board of Commissioners. The BCESC manages the county's 9-1-1 dispatch operations center and also serves as the county's Emergency Management office, working under the direction of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) on emergency preparedness, planning, mitigation, response, and recovery. The BCESC is also the home of the county's Hazmat Team 700, the Public Safety Commission, the Local Emergency Planning Commission (LEPC), and is the contact point for many other public safety organizations, including EMS, Fire, Police, and Municipal EMA services.

The BCESC works in conjunction with a number of county and offsite agencies to provide comprehensive public safety guidance and emergency support to the residents and businesses of Beaver County.

Beaver County Emergency Services
250 East End Avenue
Beaver, PA 15009

